OFFICIAL MANUAL





Acknowledgments

Thank you publications staff, Alyssa Harker and Jacob Schloss for your commitment and dedication to this edition of the *Official Manual State of Missouri* (blue book). Special thanks to Natalie Peters (summer intern) for her contribution to the book and her diligent work on the layout of the cover, her creative ideas and openness to suggestions has made this a magnificant looking piece.

I would also like to thank all the state and private organization liaisons we work so closely with, without their cooperation and assistance this book would be impossible.





Dear Fellow Missourians,

Our state is a great place to live, work and raise a family and it has been a privilege for me to serve as secretary of state. Since 1878, this office has, every two years, published the Missouri Official Manual which provides comprehensive information on federal and state government officials, state and county agencies, elections, state personnel and more. I am pleased to present the 2023–2024 publication.

This "Liberty" edition will be my fourth and final. Each edition showcases a segment of our history and progress in a feature story. The last manual featured Missouri's Bicentennial, recognizing 200 years of our great state. The 2019–2020 edition celebrated the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment granting women the right to vote. In the 2017–2018 manual, we featured Missouri agriculture and its importance to our state.

In this edition the feature article was written by John D. Ashcroft: former United States Attorney General, United States Senator, Missouri's 50th Governor, Missouri Attorney General, and Missouri Auditor. He reflects on our country's history and the meaning of liberty. From the first colonists to present day, our Founding Fathers were interested in preserving democracy and securing freedom. Thanks, Dad, for your contribution to this manual and for your service to our state and country.

I am proud of the work and research that has made these specific editions so special, and I applaud the hard work and effort of those responsible for putting this book together, especially Julie Stegeman, Director of Publications, who has been involved in the last 16 manuals.

As well, I want to thank all of you for allowing me to serve and for your continued effort to keep Missouri's future incredibly bright.

Sincerely,

John R. Ashcroft Secretary of State

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